

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT RETENTION FOR ELEMENTARY STAFF

If any child appears that he/she might be a candidate for retention, you are asked to follow the guidelines listed below:

1. Involve your principal in the evaluation of the child. This may be in discussions, having him/her observe the child in the classroom, etc.
2. Contact the resource room personnel so that testing for any learning disabilities may be implemented. Screenings for hearing and sight defects should also be considered. This should be done during the second semester of the school year.
3. Open up dialogue with the parents or guardians as soon as the problems begin to surface. The fall conference is an excellent time to begin discussions about difficulties the child is experiencing. Don't speak about retention as if it is a forgone conclusion. Rather, stress that there is still time for improvements to be made. Provide them with some ideas that they can be doing at home to help.
4. Continue to monitor and evaluate the situation. **Communication with the home is very important.** Keep the principal informed of how things are going.
5. If no improvement occurs, meet with the principal who will arrange a conference with the teacher(s), support personnel, and administration to discuss the situation.
6. At the midterm conference, be sure to schedule the parents in. Discuss the situation as you see it as a professional. Express your concerns and stress that progress needs to be seen. Be sure to emphasize any personality traits that you may be seeing in the child (frustration, anxiety, easily cries, etc.). These will have a much greater impact than informing them that he/she doesn't do well on paperwork (although they do go hand-in-hand). Discuss things that they can do at home to possibly help the situation.
7. During the next few months, keep communicating with the parents about how the child is doing. Hopefully they will be trying things at home. Let them know if you see any progress. It is very important that you communicate with them. Invite them to come to school to see how the child is doing. Also, have the resource room and the principal observe the child in the classroom.
8. By the end of April, another conference between you and the parents needs to be held. At this meeting, a frank discussion of the situation should be held. Have the principal and resource room personnel attend the meeting to review their observations. If testing has been done by the school, this should be reviewed at this time with the parents if no learning disabilities have been noted.
9. Sometime in May, a final conference with parents is to be set up. At this conference, a definite decision will be made. This conference will include the principal, the teacher(s), and the parents of the child. At this time, the parents will be asked to sign a form indicating their support or opposition to the retention. If they oppose, chances are very good that the retention will not succeed.
10. The principal, with the input of the teacher(s), parents, and other personnel, will make the final decision regarding retention or promotion. Parents may appeal any decision to the superintendent or to the school board.

Document your efforts. Keep copies of all letters. Summarize and date all phone calls or personal conversations with the parents.

If you follow these steps, chances are good that the retention will occur and that it will be successful.

Adoption date: December 10, 2007